specified time. The Director of Public Instruction has been authorised to allow reduction in school fees in all deserving cases during this educational year. The contribution of Rs. 3,50,000 above-mentioned, besides giving immediate and timely succour to the victims of the disaster, is an indication, more effective than words, that distress in any form among the subjects of the State will always receive the sympathetic attention of Government. Instructions have also been given to the officers concerned to gather full and accurate details with regard to the extent of disaster; and when these are collected and supplied, as it is hoped they will be within a very short time, the question of further concessions by way of increased grants for agricultural loans and of remissions of land revenue in regard to the destruction of trees and crops assessed to revenue will be carefully considered. Governmental generosity held in reserve to be extended on proof of eligibility and the difficulties ahead in the matter of realisation of revenues from all sources in as smooth a manner as has been possible hitherto are factors that have to be taken into account in making revenue forecasts; they should, I submit, be prominently kept in mind by others also in looking at our estimates of income and expenditure for the coming year.

Another fruitful source of disquietude is the uncertainty regarding general trade and international conditions, which precludes our making a forecast, with any degree of exactitude, of the receipts for the coming year from sources which are dependent upon trade. It is obvious that no Government, under wartime conditions, can afford to budget in the way it usually does in peace-time. Expensive and expansive schemes of public utility have to be laid by for the moment, so that expenditure might be restricted without efficiency being impaired.

PUBLIC UTILITY WORKS

Even a cursory examination of the estimates of expenditure for the next year would disclose that, although we have not provided for very many major schemes of reproductive work, the allotments made to meet the competing needs of the various departments of Government are both ample and generous. The surplus which has resulted represents just that margin of safety which is so essential to make room for possible readjustments consequent upon altered conditions in the course of the year.

I will now, with your permission, take you to some new features of the estimates for the next year. Honourable Members would assuredly have noted with satisfaction that, although our

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programme for new expenditure in the coming year is modest in the extreme, a sum of Rs. 41,500 has been provided in the Public Works Department budget under Irrigation, Original Works. The works proposed to be so taken up are distributed among practically all the taluks of the State. This, with the sum of Rs. 38,000 provided in the Panchayat budget, raises the allotment to Rs. 79,500. It is, of course, not claimed that the allotment is not capable of enhancement in more prosperous years. All that I would like to point out at this stage is that, so long as agriculture retains its primacy among the occupations of the people of this State, irrigation will continue to receive sympathetic and generous treatment at the hands of Government. The necessity of bringing all available areas within the State under paddy cultivation, which alone can free us from our dependence upon foreign sources for our staple food, rice, for a large portion of the year, cannot be over-emphasised. The utmost encouragement and all reasonable facilities will be extended to all attempts, individual or collective, in this direction. It is a matter for regret that the land colonisation scheme formulated by the Honourable Minister for Rural Development has not evoked sufficient response at the hands of the educated unemployed young men of the State.

The littoral tracts of the State present a number of difficult problems peculiar to themselves. One is that of sea erosion and the other that of pure water supply. A sum of Rs. 9,000 has been provided under Public Works for three groynes at Chellanam and a further sum of Rs. 6,000 has been provided for two groynes at Edavanakkad from which place there have been complaints for the last two or three years that the sea has, in one or two places, encroached upon the shore to an extent which made the adoption of protective measures imperative. The experiment of a casuarina plantation over 20 acres at Malippuram by the Agricultural Department of the State for which provision has been made in the budget is not merely by way of demonstration to the owners of these sandy beaches of the highly profitable nature of this method of user of their lands, but is also in the nature of protection against erosion. It is claimed on good authority that plantations of this sort are effective safeguards against erosion.

The problem of water supply in the coastal areas is beset with numerous difficulties. These have been explained more than once by Government to Honourable Members. The position is this: Water lies very near the surface in these tracts. The water, however, is not of much use to the inhabitants, because never more than the upper three or four feet are sweet, and even this

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quantity diminishes in hot weather. Below is a stratum of brackish water, and if this is tapped the well is spoilt for all practical purposes. This is one of the reasons restricting to a great extent the utility of the tube wells recently introduced. The necessity of supplementing the good work done through tube wells is thus manifest. A sum of Rs. 1,200 has been provided in the Public Works Department budget for experimental boring operations in three or four suitable localities. If subterranean water could be tapped at any place, the necessity would be met, to a large extent of a copious and potable water supply.

PENSION TO VILLAGE OFFICERS

Another item of expenditure for which we have made provision this year is in connection with the grant of pension to the village officers of this State recruited since 1099 M.E. The members of this Honourable House have been advocating the cause of these people for a long time now. The decision of Government to grant pension to all village officers, irrespective of the dates of their entry into service, removes a grievance which was a source of heartburn to newcomers to these services, who had to retire along with the others on superannuation but with no pension. It is hoped that the prospects of pension will attract educated young men to these services in larger numbers, and that the chances of losing the pension in the event of misconduct will conduce in a larger measure towards official rectitude and good behaviour.

AMENITIES TO SCHOOL CHILDREN

The provision of Rs. 5,000 for noonday meals to school-children is another refreshing item, which, it is hoped, would be widely appreciated. It is obvious that Governmental generosity in this respect has to be supplemented largely by private munificence if the object in view has to be achieved in full.

MEASURES AGAINST TUBERCULOSIS

The provision of Rs. 4,000 made in the Medical budget for a Tuberculosis Clinic at Trichur is another item designed to meet a long-felt want. The clinic at Trichur was opened on 1st January, 1941. The establishment of the clinic was the result of acceptance by the Government of the suggestions made by Dr. Moller, Medical Commissioner to the Tuberculosis Association of India. "The aim for combating tuberculosis in the State," observed the learned doctor in a communication to Government, "is to work out a scheme for prevention and organised home-treatment in order to reach as many patients as possible both with the object of treatment as well as can be done under the circumstances and of preventing

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